

Appl. No. 10/707,505
Response Dated June 7, 2006
Reply to Office Action Dated February 7, 2006

Amendments to the Drawings

Applicant has added reference numeral 643 to Figure 6D as is shown and provided on the attached "Replacement Sheet." The amendment is supported by paragraph [0061] of the specification. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

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REMARKS

Claims 1-34 were filed in the original applications. In the outstanding Office Action, claims 27-34 were withdrawn by the examiner as drawn to a non-elected species, and claims 7-10 were not examined for the same reason. In the current response, claims 27-24 have been canceled and claims 35-41 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-27 and 35-41 are pending and at issue.

Response to Drawing objection

Applicant has amended the drawings as detailed in the "Amendments to the Drawings" section above. A "Replacement Sheet" is provided herewith, and no new matter has been added.

Response to Claim objections

Applicant has amended claims 11 and 12 to provide proper antecedent basis.

Response to the §112 rejections

Claims 7-10, 13 and 25 were rejected for failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Applicant respectfully disagrees. In particular, the petal retention members, the piston, the check valve, and the bladder are each described in the specification in great detail. In addition, one of ordinary skill in the art, would be able to combine the petal retention members with any one of the piston, the check valve, and the bladder. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the §112 rejection be withdrawn.

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Response to the §102(b) rejections

Applicant respectfully submits that the anticipation rejection of claims 1 and 24 under U.S. Patent 2,594,292 ("Cornelius"), U.S. Patent 2,324,682 ("De Long"), U.S. Patent 3,329,217 ("Urbanosky"), U.S. Patent 2,571,644 ("Zublin"), should be withdrawn, as all of these references taken alone (or in combination) fail to disclose each and every element of the claims and, therefore, fail to anticipate the claims.

In particular, claims 1 and 24 each recite "an *elastic* retention member segmented into a plurality of petals, wherein the petals are oriented relative to each other to minimize an aperture near a center of the retention member." In contrast, Cornelius discloses a core catcher having a plurality of fingers that are pivotally attached. (Column 9, lines 8-20). The fingers, however, are not elastic but rather pivot to accommodate a core sample. Similarly, Urbanosky discloses non-elastic fingers that have to undergo deformation in order to retain a core sample. (Column 4, lines 18-30). De Long only discloses the fact that the tool has a core catcher 33a, but does not disclose any further information as to the structure or function of the catcher 33a. The Office Action states that De Long discloses petals (27), however, applicant has been unable to find the petals (27) or any other kind of petals for that matter. Zublin discloses an apparatus having a core catcher (50) for recovering side wall cores. However, applicant has been unable to find the plurality of petals (27), as is stated in the Office Action, or any kind of elastic petal. Accordingly, the anticipation rejection of claims 1 and 24 and their dependent claims should be withdrawn.

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Response to §103 rejections

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 17 and 19 as obvious over De Long in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,807,234 ("Duperon") and claim 21 as obvious over De Long in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,296,822 ("Ormsby"), as any combination of these references fails to teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations and, as such, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established.

In particular, each of the claims at issue recites "an elastic retention member segmented into a plurality of petals, wherein the petals are oriented relative to each other to minimize an aperture near a center of the retention member." While each of De Long, Duperon and Ormsby discloses some type of coring tool, none of these references disclose petals that are oriented relative to each other to minimize an aperture near a center of the retention member. Accordingly, the obviousness rejection of claims 17, 19 and 21 should be withdrawn.

New Claims

Claims 35-41 are novel and non-obvious over the cited art as none of the cited references disclose, teach or suggest alone or in combination a sidewall coring tool having a tool body, a hollow coring shaft extendable from the tool body, a formation cutter disposed at a distal end of the hollow coring shaft; and an elastic retention member segmented into a plurality of petals and disposed in the hollow coring shaft, wherein the plurality of petals form a substantially contiguous surface.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested

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to pass this application to issue.

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action dated February 7, 2006 for which the three-month date for response is May 7, 2006. A request for a one (1) month extension of the time to respond to the Official Action is hereby made, bringing the date for response to June 7, 2006. Please apply any charges not covered, such as the one-month extension fee of \$120, or any credits, to Deposit Account 19-0610 (Reference Number 20.2896).

Date: 6/07/06

Respectfully submitted,


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